AT very:

TURN: Your link author acknowledges that we can still use Kant’s moral insights such that the ideas do not pollute any further application. This also puts you in a double bind. Your own author chooses to draw from Kant in his moral thinking thus if you reject my authors you need to reject your own. Here is his conclusion to the paper. **VERY[[1]](#footnote-1):** Even though I am unpersuaded by these arguments, **I do not think all is lost for Kant. There is a way out** of the paradox that, to my knowledge, is overlooked in the literature. **It does not involve ignoring Kant’s racism,** explaining it away, justifying it, **or** even **condemning him for it, but** simply **acknowledging it.** It does not involve distinguishing among his writings, but distinguishing among his claims. **Here is a solution: Good moral philosophers may make immoral claims and still be good moral philosophers. Some of Kant’s claims are good, and some, like the racist ones, are bad.** Kant’s bad claims may reflect poorly on his general philosophical aptitude, but **they do not mean that all of his claims are wrong.** This solution might be palatable to both Kant enthusiasts and critical race theorists because it acknowledges and brings to light Kant’s contributions to the majoritarian conception of race without dismissing him as a philosopher completely.

top level:

TURN: We have to develop a framework if we care about their role of the ballot. The only way to fight oppression in the real world is this substantive argumentation. **LOVETT[[2]](#footnote-2):** Win the argument; **don’t declare the argument too offensive to be won**. And that’s true whether it’s GLAAD making demands of A&E or the head of the Republican National Committee making demands of MSNBC. The bottom line is, **you don’t beat an idea by beating a person. You beat an idea by beating an idea. Not only is it counter-productive**—nobody likes the kid who complains to the teacher even when the kid is right—**it replaces a competition of arguments with a competition to delegitimize arguments.** And **what’s left is the pressure to sand down the corners of your speech while looking for the rough edges in the speech of your adversaries. Everyone is offended. Everyone is offensive**. Nothing is close to the line because close to the line is over the line because over the line is better for clicks and retweets and fundraising and ad revenue. It’s like a financial bubble. It’s a bubble of subprime outrage and subprime apologies. I just hope we can rationalize the market before this chilling effect leaves us with a discourse more boring and monotone than it already is—a discourse that suits the cable networks and the politicians but not the many disparate voices who occasionally need to say outrageous things because there are outrageous things to say. And there are real consequences to the outrage bubble. **When Congress was debating the debt ceiling, one of the sticking points was a set of changes to the military-pension system.** You don’t even have to take a position on these changes to say that it’s a reasonable debate: whether we should save money in the defense budget by reducing the rate of increase in pension benefits received by veterans who are younger than retirement age. Agree, disagree, you’re not crossing the line, right? Wrong: **Supporting this proposal is described, over and over again, as**[**“sick” and “obscene”**](http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/obscene-scarborough-budget-military/2013/12/18/id/542534/)**and “**[**offensive**](http://www.armytimes.com/article/20131223/BENEFITS/312300001/Pensions-slashed-under-budget-bill-provision)**.” Do we really want to make policy this way?** Do we want our already timid and craven elected officials to have even more to fear?

turns to kant is a racist:

TURN: The categorical imperative is key to challenging racism—incorporating abstraction is key. **FARR:**[[3]](#footnote-3)Whereas most criticisms are aimed at the formulation of universal law and the formula of autonomy, our analysis here will focus on the formula of an end in itself and the formula of the kingdom of ends, since we have already addressed the problem of universality. The latter will be discussed ﬁrst. At issue here is what Kant means by “kingdom of ends.” Kant writes: “By ‘kingdom’ I understand a systematic union of different rational beings through common laws.”32 The above passage indicates that Kant recognizes different, perhaps different kinds, of rational beings; however, the problem for most critics of Kant lies in the assumption that Kant suggests that the “kingdom of ends” requires that we abstract from personal differences and content of private ends. **The Kantian conception of rational beings requires** such an **abstraction. Some** feminists and **philosophers of race** have **found** this **abstract** notion of **rational beings problematic because** they take it to mean that **rationality is** necessarily **white, male, and European.**33 Hence, the systematic union of rational beings can mean only the systematic union of white, European males. **I ﬁnd this interpretation** of Kant’s moral theory quite **puzzling.** Surely another interpretation is available. That is, the implication that in Kant’s philosophy, rationality can only apply to white, European males does not seem to be the only alternative. The problem seems to lie in the requirement of abstraction. There are two ways of looking at the abstraction requirement that I think are faithful to Kant’s text and that overcome the criticisms of this requirement. **First,** the **abstraction** requirement **may be best understood as a demand for intersubjectivity** or recognition. **Second, it may be understood as an attempt to avoid ethical egoism** in determining maxims for our actions. It is unfortunate that Kant never worked out a theory of intersubjectivity, as did his successors Fichte and Hegel. However, this is not to say that there is not in Kant’s philosophy a tacit theory of intersubjectivity or recognition. The **abstraction** requirement simply **demands that in the midst of our concrete differences we recognize ourselves in the other and the other in ourselves.** That is, we recognize in others the humanity that we have in common. Recognition of our common humanity is at the same time recognition of rationality in the other. We recognize in the other the capacity for selfdetermination and the capacity to legislate for a kingdom of ends. This brings us to the second interpretation of the abstraction requirement. **To avoid** ethical **egoism one must abstract from** (think beyond) one’s own **personal interest** and subjective maxims. That is, the categorical imperative requires that I recognize that I am a member of the realm of rational beings. Hence, I organize my maxims in consideration of other rational beings. Under such a principle other people cannot be treated merely as a means for my end but must be treated as ends in themselves. **The merit of the categorical imperative for a philosophy of race is that it contravenes racist ideology** to the extent **that** racist ideology **is based on the use of persons** of a different race **as a means to an end** rather than as ends in themselves. Embedded in the formulation of an end in itself and the formula of the kingdom of ends is the recognition of the common hope for humanity. That is, maxims ought to be chosen on the basis of an ideal, a hope for the amelioration of humanity. This ideal or ethical commonwealth (as Kant calls it in the Religion) is the kingdom of ends.34 Although the merits of Kant’s moral theory may be recognizable at this point, we are still in a bit of a bind. It still seems problematic that the moral theory of a racist is essentially an antiracist theory. Further, what shall we do with Henry Louis Gates’s suggestion that we use the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime to deconstruct the Grounding? What I have tried to suggest is that instead of abandoning the categorical imperative we should attempt to deepen our understanding of it and its place in Kant’s critical philosophy. A deeper reading of the Grounding and Kant’s philosophy in general may produce the deconstruction35 suggested by Gates. However, a text is not necessarily deconstructed by reading it against another. Texts often deconstruct themselves if read properly. To be sure, the best way to understand a text is to read it in context. Hence, if the Grounding is read within the context of the critical philosophy, the tools for a deconstruction of the text are provided by its context and the tensions within the text. Gates is right to suggest that the Grounding must be deconstructed. However, this deconstruction requires much more than reading the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime against the Grounding. It requires a complete engagement with the critical philosophy. Such an engagement discloses some of Kant’s very signiﬁcant claims about humanity and the practical role of reason. With this disclosure, deconstruction of the Grounding can begin. What **deconstruction will reveal** is not necessarily the inconsistency of Kant’s moral philosophy or the racist or sexist nature of the categorical imperative, but rather, it will disclose the **disunity between Kant’s theory and his own feelings** about blacks and women. **Although** the theory is consistent and emancipatory and should apply to all persons, **Kant** the man **has his own** personal and moral **problems**. Although Kant’s attitude toward people of African descent was deplorable, **it would be equally deplorable to reject the categorical imperative without ﬁrst exploring its emancipatory potential.**

TURN: The Kantian subject is the embodied subject—universalizability is essential to mutual recognition of others. **FARR:**[[4]](#footnote-4) **One** of the most popular **criticism**s **of Kant’s moral philosophy is that it is too formalistic.**13 That is, the universal nature of the categorical imperative leaves it devoid of content. Such a principle is useless since moral decisions are made by concrete individuals in a concrete, historical, and social situation. This type of criticism lies behind Lewis Gordon’s rejection of any attempt to ground an antiracist position on Kantian principles. The rejection of universal principles for the sake of emphasizing the historical embeddedness of the human agent is widespread in recent philosophy and social theory. I will argue here on Kantian grounds that **although a distinction between the universal and the concrete is** a **valid** distinction, **the unity of the two is required for** an understanding of human **agency.** The attack on Kantian formalism began with Hegel’s criticism of the Kantian philosophy.14 The list of contemporary theorists who follow Hegel’s line of criticism is far too long to deal with in the scope of this paper. Although these theorists may approach the problem of Kantian formalism from a variety of angles, the spirit of their criticism is basically the same: The universality of the categorical imperative is an abstraction from one’s empirical conditions. **Kant is** often **accused of making the moral agent an abstract, empty**, noumenal **subject. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Kantian subject is** an **embodied**, empirical, concrete subject. However, this concrete subject has a dual nature. Kant claims in the Critique of Pure Reason as well as in the Grounding that human beings have an intelligible and empirical character.15 It is impossible to understand and do justice to Kant’s moral theory without taking seriously the relation between these two characters. The very concept of morality is impossible without the tension between the two. By “empirical character” Kant simply means that we have a sensual nature. We are physical creatures with physical drives or desires. **The** very **fact that I cannot simply satisfy my desires without considering the rightness** or wrongness **of my actions suggests that my empirical character must be held in check** by something, or else I behave like a Freudian id. My empiri- cal character must be held in check **by my intelligible character**, which is the legislative activity of practical reason. It is through our intelligible character that **we formulate principles that keep our** empirical **impulses in check.** The categorical imperative is the supreme principle of morality that is constructed by the moral agent in his/her moment of self-transcendence. What I have called self-transcendence may be best explained in the following passage by Onora O’Neill: In restricting our maxims to those that meet the test of the categorical imperative we refuse to base our lives on maxims that necessarily make our own case an exception. The reason why a universilizability criterion is morally signiﬁcant is that it makes our own case no special exception (G, IV, 404). In accepting the Categorical Imperative we accept the moral reality of other selves, and hence the possibility (not, note, the reality) of a moral community. **The Formula of Universal Law enjoins no more than that we act only on maxims that are open to others also.**16 O’Neill’s description of the universalizability criterion includes the notion of self-transcendence that I am working to explicate here to the extent that like self-transcendence, universalizable moral principles require that the individ- ual think beyond his or her own particular desires. **The individual is not allowed to exclude others as** rational **moral agents** who have the right to act as he acts in a given situation. For example, if I decide to use another person merely as a means for my own end I must recognize the other person’s right to do the same to me. I cannot consistently will that I use another as a means only and will that I not be used in the same manner by another. **Hence,** the **universalizability** criterion **is a principle of consistency and** a principle of **inclusion.** That is, in choosing my maxims **I** attempt to **include the perspective of other moral agents.**

TURN: Kantian ethics is key to challenge the lifestyle grounded in materialism that propagates racism. **BOXHILL[[5]](#footnote-5):** Third, although the last point is significant, **it should not be confused with** a more general **condemnation of Kant’s rationalism**. In particular, **his insistence on crucial role of reason** in moral deliberation and finding solutions to social problems is separable from the previous objection, and it **seems quite right**. **Kant argued, rightly** we think, **that the development of deliberative reason is** crucially **important for groups, as well as individuals, to develop solutions to the problems of social justice. Although more than reason is required** for moral living and decent communities, **Kant seems right that people who tried to life** as he (no doubt falsely) portrayed the Tahitian, without the use of reason and only for enjoyment, **would be ill equipped to handle the social and moral problems inevitably presented by the hard realities of human life.** Thus, while he arguably inflated the value of the lifestyle devoted to perfecting reason, **his main message**, the need for the use (and so adequate development of) deliberative reason, **is still much needed.**

TURN: We shouldn’t good arguments or ideas an author makes just because they are bad in some in other way. For example, if someone was a civil rights activist but also an anti-Semite, we could not listen to anything they said which means that we would reject all ideas that were pro-civil rights, which seems an unacceptable consequence. **WOOD[[6]](#footnote-6):** Often,**criticisms** of Kant (or any other historical philosopher)on such grounds**are really an indirect way of arguing against the contemporary use of a philosopher’s ideas by others who**obviously**do not share** Kant’s **errors about race or gender. It is a cheap way of resisting an important philosopher’s influence.**Often enough this is nothing but a strategy of “guilt by association,” practiced by those who are evidently incapable of challenging the philosopher’s ideas on their genuine merits.There is no plausibility at all, for example, in the suggestion that such Kantian principles as human equality, rationalism, universalism, and cosmopolitanism are in their content favorable to racism, sexism, or other forms of oppression, and such a thesis needs only to be stated explicitly to discredit itself. But this highly implausible thesis may be put forward by implication if it can be associated with the quite distinct but correct point that *even*a cosmopolitan and universalistic ethical theory, such as Kant’s, can be combined with racist or male-supremacist views in its application. It is also true that egalitarianism, **rationalism, universalism**, and cosmopolitanism **are** especially **liable to rhetorical abuse by those who advocate policies in** direct **violation of them**, **because subscribing to the correct principles** at an abstract level **is often** enough **a shabby ploy** used to protect contrary policies from criticism**. The thought that this** point **has any *philosophical*significance**, however, **rests on an error** of abysmal proportions about philosophy and its relation to human practices.**If someone thinks there is a philosophical theory of morality whose uncritical adoption**and mechanical application**would suffice to protect us from evil, then that person is looking for something that could never exist. The correct standard for an ethical theory is whether it gets things right at the level of basic**principles and **values, not whether it**contains some magical property that**protects us**, in the application of the theory,**from every**perversion or abuse through the influence of tradition and**prejudice or** the infinite **human** ingenuity of **rationalization.**All theories are about equally subject to such abuse, and no theory is immune to it. In fact, **[I]f we think that the adoption of a certain philosophical theory**, or a certain set of religious dogmas,**will protect us from all moral error, that way of thinking**itself is extremely dangerous, quite irrespective of the content of the theory or dogma with which we associate it. That thought itself**is actually responsible for a lot of the evil that people do.**

There is nothing good or bad about endorsing certain ideas. All ideas have been misused or applied to do horrible things. Ideas are not good or bad; it’s how they are utilized. Ideas aren’t racist; people are racist. My endorsement of certain Kantian ideals is not an endorsement of the person, but the concept.

gender advantage:

Kantian studies are vital for gender equality. **HAY[[7]](#footnote-7):** **Kant's defense of the ultimate moral importance of our rational nature is something that feminists cannot afford to ignore**. This is because, as we will see in detail in Chapter 4, harms to one's rational nature are among the worst harms an oppressed person can face. **It is critically important for feminists to have something to say about why harms to women's rational capacities are seriously morally problematic because these harms are among the most egregious problems** that arise from women's oppression. [continues] Kantianism gives us a way to explain what is wrong with these harms. Despite what Kant himself might have thought, we know that women's rational capacities are no different from men's. Thus, we know that **women are just as deserving of respect as men**. And we know that **the respect that women are owed in virtue of their rational capacities is incompatible with the harms to women's rationality that can result from oppression**. **Feminists therefore have good reason to take Kant**ianism seriously **since Kant's work** on rationality **gives us the conceptual tools to make sense of what is wrong with** some of the worst harms of **sexist oppression.** But Kantianism is hardly the only moral framework that has the resources to explain what is wrong with harming women's rational capacities. What then, precisely, is the baby feminists risk throwing out with the Kantian bathwater?88 The baby, I hope it is clear by now, is the Kantian duty of self-respect. **Because Kant provides such a robust account of duties to the self, his account is unparalleled in its ability to fully explain the moral importance of self-respect. We will see next that his account is also unparalleled in its ability to condemn** certain **gendered norms of self-sacrifice.**

not a reason to reject/defense:

Kant changed his mind on race. **KLEINGELD**[[8]](#footnote-8)**:** During the 1780s, as Kant was developing his universalistic moral theory, he published texts in which he defended the superiority of whites over non-whites. Whether commentators see this as evidence of inconsistent universalism or of consistent inegalitarianism, they generally assume that Kant’s position on race remained stable during the 1780s and 1790s. Against this standard view, **I argue on the basis of** his **texts that Kant radically changed his mind.** I examine his 1780s race theory and his hierarchical conception of the races, and subsequently address the question of the signiﬁcance of these views, especially in the light of Kant’s own ethical theory. I then show that **during the 1790s Kant restricts the role of** the concept of **race, and drops his hierarchical account** of the races **in favor of a** more **genuinely egalitarian** and cosmopolitan **view.**

Definitely not a racist. **KLEINGELD**[[9]](#footnote-9)**:** **Kant radically revised his views on race** during the 1790s. He gives no indication of when or why he changed his views. He makes no mention of a racial hierarchy anywhere in his published writings of the 1790s, however, and what he does say about related issues contradicts his earlier views on a racial hierarchy and a plan of Nature designed to restrict human migration (after their initial dispersal across the globe). I ﬁrst discuss evidence for the thesis that Kant dropped his hierarchical view of the races, and then turn to the status of the concept of race as such in his later work. In Toward Perpetual Peace and the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant clearly departs from his earlier position in a number of ways. First of all, he becomes more egalitarian with regard to race.28 He now grants a full juridical status to non-whites, a status irreconcilable with his earlier defence of slavery. For example, **his concept of cosmopolitan right**, as introduced in Toward Perpetual Peace (: ), **explicitly prohibits** the **colonial conquest** of foreign lands: If one compares with this [viz the idea of cosmopolitan right] the inhospitable behaviour of the civilized states in our part of the world, especially the commercial ones, the injustice that the latter show when visiting foreign lands and peoples (which to them is one and the same as conquering those lands and peoples) takes on terrifying propor- tions. America, the negro countries, the Spice Islands, the Cape, etc., were at the time of their discovery lands that they regarded as belonging to no one, for the native inhabitants counted as nothing to them. **Any European settlement requires contractual agreement** with the existing population, says Kant, unless the settlement takes place so far from other people that there is no encroachment on anyone’s use of land. In the section on cosmopolitan right in the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant speciﬁcally stipulates **that** such a contract **should not take advantage of** the ignorance of **the inhabitants** with regard to the terms of the contract (MM : ), a stipulation which presupposes a concern not found in the 1780s texts. The very fact that Kant regards Native Americans, Africans and Asians as (equally) capable of signing contracts, and as persons whose interests and claims present a normative constraint on the behaviour of European powers, indicates a shift in perspective. After all, as long as Kant regarded slavery as appropriate for Native Americans and Africans, he did not con- sider their consent to be important at all. The same can be said about the fact that he now defends hunting and shepherding peoples against en- croachment by Europeans, instead of highlighting their failure to develop agriculture as he did earlier. In the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant rejects con- sequentialist justiﬁcations for colonialism (the alleged ‘civilizing’ eﬀects on the ‘savages’) (MM : ). He also rejects the argument that the European colonists are justiﬁed in claiming ownership over foreign lands and their inhabitants by the fact they ‘establish a new civil union with them and bring these human beings (savages) into a rightful condition’. Instead, Kant main- tains that the latter have the right of ﬁrst possession, and that this right is violated by the European ownership claims (MM : ). Importantly, Kant has now become unambiguously opposed to chattel slavery. Robert Bernasconi has claimed that Kant was ‘silent on the slave trade in Africans’ and ‘failed to speak out against chattel slavery’, and that he is ‘aware of no direct statement by Kant calling for the abolition of either African slavery or the slave trade, even if only in principle’.29 Such state- ments do exist, however. In his notes for Toward Perpetual Peace (–), **Kant repeatedly and explicitly criticizes slavery** of non-Europeans in the strongest terms, as a grave violation of cosmopolitan right (: –). He formulates a scathing critique of the conduct of European powers elsewhere in the world. He sharply criticizes ‘the civilized countries bordering the seas’, whom he accuses of recognizing no normative constraints in their behaviour towards people on other continents and of regarding the ‘possess- ions and even the person of the stranger as a loot given to them by Nature’. Kant censures the slave trade (‘trade in Negroes’), not as an excessive form of an otherwise acceptable institution, but as in itself a ‘violation’ of the cosmopolitan right of blacks (: ). Similarly, he criticizes the fact that the inhabitants of America were treated as objects belonging to no one, and ‘were displaced or enslaved’ soon after Europeans reached the continent (: –). After having discussed European behaviour in Africa, America and Asia, he concludes (: ): The principles underlying the supposed lawfulness of appropriating newly discovered and purportedly barbaric or irreligious lands, as goods belonging to no one, without the consent of the inhabitants and even subjugating them as well, are absolutely contrary to cosmopolitan right. In the published version of Toward Perpetual Peace, Kant repeats this judge- ment. He criticizes the ‘very most gruesome and most calculated slavery’30 on the Sugar Islands (PP : ). In the Metaphysics of Morals too (MM : , , ), he categorically and repeatedly condemns chattel slavery.31 These passages show that Kant changed his earlier views on the status of non-whites. The oft-defended thesis that Kant’s racism remained constant thus needs correction, and one should not use evidence from the 1780s in support of claims about his views in the 1790s. For example, his statements from the mid-1790s contradict the view that the role of the ‘idle races’ in Kant’s cosmopolitan theory was merely that of a contrast against which Europeans could measure their own progress,32 as well as the view that for Kant, the non-white races counted as a ‘waste’ of nature.33 These inter- pretations are based on Kant’s earlier texts, and therefore they are at most defensible as interpretations of his earlier views, not of his later views on the races. Kant not only became more egalitarian with regard to race, he also revised his view of the role of race in connection with intercontinental migration. In some of his earlier writings he called racial diﬀerentiation ‘necessary’ for the preservation of the species during its initial dispersal across the globe (DCHR : ), and claimed that Nature discouraged sub- sequent migrations. As Mark Larrimore has shown, however, these claims were in tension with Kant’s repeated declarations, often in the same writings, that whites are able to live anywhere on earth,34 for they imply that racial diﬀerentiation (or, more precisely, the development of non-whites) is not really necessary for the preservation of the species after all. Kant’s later position simply does not attribute any special role to racial diﬀerentiation (let alone racial hierarchy) for the purpose of global migration. In his 1795 description of what Nature has done to enable humans to live everywhere on earth, Kant omits any mention of predispositions for diﬀer- ent races (PP : –). He now claims that Nature has organized the earth in such a way that humans can and will live everywhere, and that they will eventually use the surface of the earth for interacting peacefully (PP : ). The new category of cosmopolitan right, introduced in Toward Perpetual Peace, is premised on increasing and continuing movement and interaction across borders. He concludes his exposition of cosmopolitan right (which includes his critique of colonialism and slavery) with the hope that In this way, remote parts of the world can establish relations peacefully with one another, relations which ultimately become regulated by public laws and can thus ﬁnally bring the human species ever closer to a cosmopolitan constitution (PP : ). Instead of his earlier claim that blacks and Native Americans cannot govern themselves (: ) and that Europe ‘will probably eventually legislate for all other continents’ (IUH : ), Kant now envisages a world in which people of diﬀerent colours and on diﬀerent continents establish peaceful relations with each other that honour the normative principles laid down in his exposition of cosmopolitan right. Finally, Kant’s ascription of mental characteristics to the diﬀerent races has changed. For example, **he ascribes** the ideal of **military courage equally to Native Americans and** mediaeval **European knights** (PP : ). This stands **in** marked **contrast with his earlier insistence** on the weakness and inertia of Native Americans.

AT reason is tainted:

Objections about the racism or sexism of reason miss the point and concede the validity of deontic theory. **WOOD[[10]](#footnote-10): The gender and color of “reason.”** To be taken more seriously are those criticisms of reason which take the form of claiming that the traditional notion of reason, in both philosophy and culture, is gendered (masculine) or ethnically biased (in favor of imperialist Europeans). Just as for Darcy ‘reason’ refers to the deliverances of his class prejudices, so **it can be true** for a lot of our culture, and also for even its greatest philosophers, **that what is taken to be “rational” is** systematically **determined by social ideologies and traditions**, so that “rational nature” may take on for them the characteristics of their culture, or gender or class, and related notions like ‘universal law’ come to express some invidious particularism. In the previous section we have even seen some solid grounds for raising questions of this kind about Kant himself. **The crucial point**, however, **is that notions like ‘reason’ and ‘universal validity’ could not play this ideological role if they did not** *also, and* ***more fundamentally***, **refer to the human capacity that enables people** (often only gradually and painfully) **to criticize their false conceptions** (including their false conceptions of reason itself). For it is **only by appealing to the critical capacity of reason** (**which we** ourselves **presuppose even in criticizing the** “gendered” or **“colored” character** of “reason” in philosophy or in other areas of life) **that the ideologies are capable of mystifying**, deceiving, **and passing off one thing for another**. If Kantians use standards of “reason” that are biased in such ways, then that is a legitimate issue, to be settled on the merits of each case where the charge is brought. It cannot be settled either way by the fact that Immanuel Kant was a white Prussian male. (This fact no doubt arouses legitimate suspicion on some topics, given Kant’s prejudiced views about women and nonwhites; but to use it as an *argument* is only to display yet another prejudice.) **The human critical and self-directive capacity is the only legitimate referent** of ‘reason’ **in Kantian ethics**, **especially when** it comes to the task of **separating Kant’s errors**, or the prejudices of his time or his personality, **from the philosophical principles** on **which we are grounding ethical theory**. For Kant, what we say about (or with the pretended authority of) reason is always fallible, subject to critical scrutiny, and to be tested through free and open communication with others (KrV A xi and note, A 738–57/B766– 85, O 8:144–6). It is therefore important, especially while criticizing Kant, always to recognize that we ourselves may be just as subject to errors and prejudices as Kant was. This, once again, is why feeling superior to him is an even more dangerous error than blindly following him, because it is the error to which we are more likely to succumb.

AT gordon:

**Farr 2** writes[[11]](#footnote-11)

The above criticism of Kant by **Gordon oversimpliﬁes Kant’s position.** Gordon’s criticism is based on the possibility that one can hate humanity yet still act out of duty towards humanity. This is true. I do not have to care about a person to treat him in a way that is demanded by the moral law. The result, it seems, is love for some abstract idea of humanity and no love for concrete individual people. **This criticism**, however, is a bit misguided. It **imposes on the categorical imperative a binary opposition between concrete and abstract humanity. The real opposition**, or better yet, apposition **is between subjective and objective maxims.** What is generally taken to be abstract in Kant’s moral philosophy is its emphasis on objectivity. **But** this emphasis on **objectivity is not an attempt to dismiss concrete humanity, but** rather **to include humanity** in general **in** our **moral decision-making** processes.

1. [ibid] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jon Lovett, “The Culture of Shut Up.” The Atlantic, April 2014. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/04/the-culture-of-shut-up/360239/)> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Arnold Farr (prof of phil @ UKentucky, focusing on German idealism, philosophy of race, postmodernism, psychoanalysis, and liberation philosophy). “Can a Philosophy of Race Afford to Abandon the Kantian Categorical Imperative?” JOURNAL of SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 33 No. 1, Spring 2002, 17–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Arnold Farr (prof of phil @ UKentucky, focusing on German idealism, philosophy of race, postmodernism, psychoanalysis, and liberation philosophy). “Can a Philosophy of Race Afford to Abandon the Kantian Categorical Imperative?” JOURNAL of SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 33 No. 1, Spring 2002, 17–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Kant and Race. Thomas Hill, Jr. and Bernard Boxhill. Chapter 18 of “Race and Racism.” [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. # Kantian Ethics By Allen W. Wood.

   Top of Form

   Bottom of Form [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. KANTIANISM, Liberalism; and Feminism Resisting Oppression Carol Hay *University of Massachusetts Lowell, USA* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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